



NEWSLETTER OF THE LONDON CHAPTER,
ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

55 Centre St., London, Ontario N6J 1T4
(519) 675-7742; Fax: 675-7777



Summer 1998

98-4

THE SILVERMAN SITE AND RIVIERE AU VASE PHASE CERAMICS

CHRIS WATTS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES INC.

Thursday, September 10th, 1998, 8 PM
London Museum of Archaeology

For our September speaker night we are pleased to present Chris Watts of Archaeological Services Inc. in Toronto speaking on his analysis of the Silverman site. Silverman is an extensive Riviere au Vase phase component located near Windsor that was excavated by Meyer Heritage Consultants Inc. and subsequently formed the basis for Chris's M.A. thesis at the University of Toronto. The meeting will be held at **THE LONDON MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY**, 1600 Attawandaron Road (near the corner of Wonderland and Fanshawe Park Road in the northwest end of the city) at 8 PM.

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Chris Ellis (858-9852)
515-1510 Richmond St. N., N6G 4V2

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Neal Ferris (432-2165)
451 Tecumseh St E., N6C 1T6

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ANNUAL RATES

Individual.....	\$15.00
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EXECUTIVE REPORT

Your Executive reports that our two most recent publications, *The Adder Orchard Site, Lithic Technology and Spatial Organization in the Broadpoint Late Archaic*, by Jacqueline Fisher, and *The Myers Road Site: The Early to Middle Iroquoian Transition*, edited by Ron Williamson, are selling briskly. Order your copy today by contacting the Chapter office.

The 25th Annual Symposium of the OAS will be held from October 16th to 18th at the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford. The symposium theme is **Archaeology and First Nations "Bridges from the Past to a Better Tomorrow"**, with two sub-themes: **"From Time Immemorial: The First 10,000 Years"** and **"The Last Few Centuries"**. Program Chair Paul Lennox has organized an impressive series of speakers who will be exploring several aspects of these timely themes. Look for a registration package, accommodation information and a preliminary list of speakers in the most recent issue of *Arch Notes*.

SOCIAL REPORT

Well summer is rolling along and we haven't yet had a London Chapter picnic. It's not too late, if members want to get together in late August or early September. What we really need is someone to organize the outing! Contact a member of the Chapter Executive if you have an idea for a venue or if you are interested in helping to organize the event.

EDITORS' REPORT

In the lead article in this issue long-time OAS member Charles Garrad has woven archaeological, ethnohistorical and linguistic data into an entertaining and informative account of the identification of the Wenro and their seventeenth century movements. This paper is an important contribution to the much neglected history of the Wenro people and we are sure it will be of interest to Chapter Members.

After a long hiatus, we are also pleased to revive our tradition of publishing projectile point type descriptions in this issue, with Lawrence Jackson's description of Plainville Plano points. We are sure that members will continue to find these type descriptions useful in their classificatory work. There are undoubtedly other undefined point types lurking in the dirt. If you are aware of one, why not pull the information together and submit it to **KEWA**!

On the same note, the manuscript file is looking pretty slim. If you have a paper or a short site report that might be suitable for **KEWA** we would love to see it!

THE SURVIVAL OF THE WENRO AND HOW I BECAME ONE

Charles Garrad

Introduction

In 1638 the Wenro moved from New York to the Hurons. Once the honeymoon was over they were never mentioned again. However, they did not disappear. They remain identifiable to this day, almost.

The Wenro

The name "Wenro" is an abbreviation in accepted casual use for Wenrôhronons (8enrôhronons), a name with numerous variants, which was long thought to mean "people of the place of the floating scum" (JR17:24,25; Hewitt 1910 cited in White 1978:409-411), although recent linguistic research suggests otherwise (Steckley 1985, 1990, 1991, 1993).

When first mentioned in history the Wenro were in western New York State, one day's journey west of the Seneca, towards the Neutrals. Although allied to, and dependant on, the Neutrals, the Wenro traded with the Dutch and English. In 1638, the Wenro abandoned their New York homeland and sought refuge with the Hurons of Ontario. As Father Jerome Lalemant explained:

The Wenrôhronons formed in the past one of the associate Nations of the Neutral Nation, and were located on its boundaries, towards the Hiroquois .. but the people of the Neutral Nation having .. withdrawn and severed their relations with them .. they could not have remained much longer without being entirely exterminated, if they had not resolved to retreat and take refuge in the protection and alliance of ... our Hurons (JR17:25-31).

In 1638, more than six hundred Wenro refugees arrived at the Huron village of Ossossane (Figure 1), where the greater part of them remained, others being "immediately distributed through the principal Villages of the country" (JR17:25-31).

At first the plight of the arrivals evoked compassion. The Hurons gave them every possible assistance, went out to meet them, assigned them "the best places in the cabins", and showed every hospitable consideration, as to relatives. Father Jerome Lalemant called them "poor refugees" and "those poor Strangers taking refuge in this country" (JR17:25-31). On their part, the newly arrived Wenros evidently tried to get along with their new hosts by imitating their example. A sufficient number professed Christianity and were baptized along with Hurons that the Jesuits initially suspected the workings of divine Providence, both because of the conversions, and also the opportunity afforded to learn the Neutral dialect spoken by the Wenros (JR16:253). This honeymoon did not last. Even the sympathetic Lalemant, while

applauding the skill of the Wenros in curing arrow wounds, distanced himself from "those strangers" when he found "the devil" tangentially associated with the process. To Father Francesco Bressani they were simply "Barbarians, who had recently come into the country .. who had formerly traded with the English, Dutch, and other heretical Europeans" and who provided "new weight" to the "insolence" of the traditional Huron Captains by repeating the anti-Jesuit sentiments they had heard from the Protestant Europeans (JR17:25-31,37,213; JR39:141).

Although it was by familiarising themselves with the Wenro dialect that two Jesuits from Huronia adept at languages were enabled to go to the Neutrals (JR21:187-9), the Wenros themselves were never again mentioned in Huronia. However, thanks to the recent work of the linguist John Steckley, we now have some understanding of why the Wenros went to Ossossane, and of their later survival as the Big Turtle Clan of the Wyandot Tribe. This was achieved by identifying the occupants of Ossossane, and by taking a fresh look at the meaning of the name "Wenrôhronons".

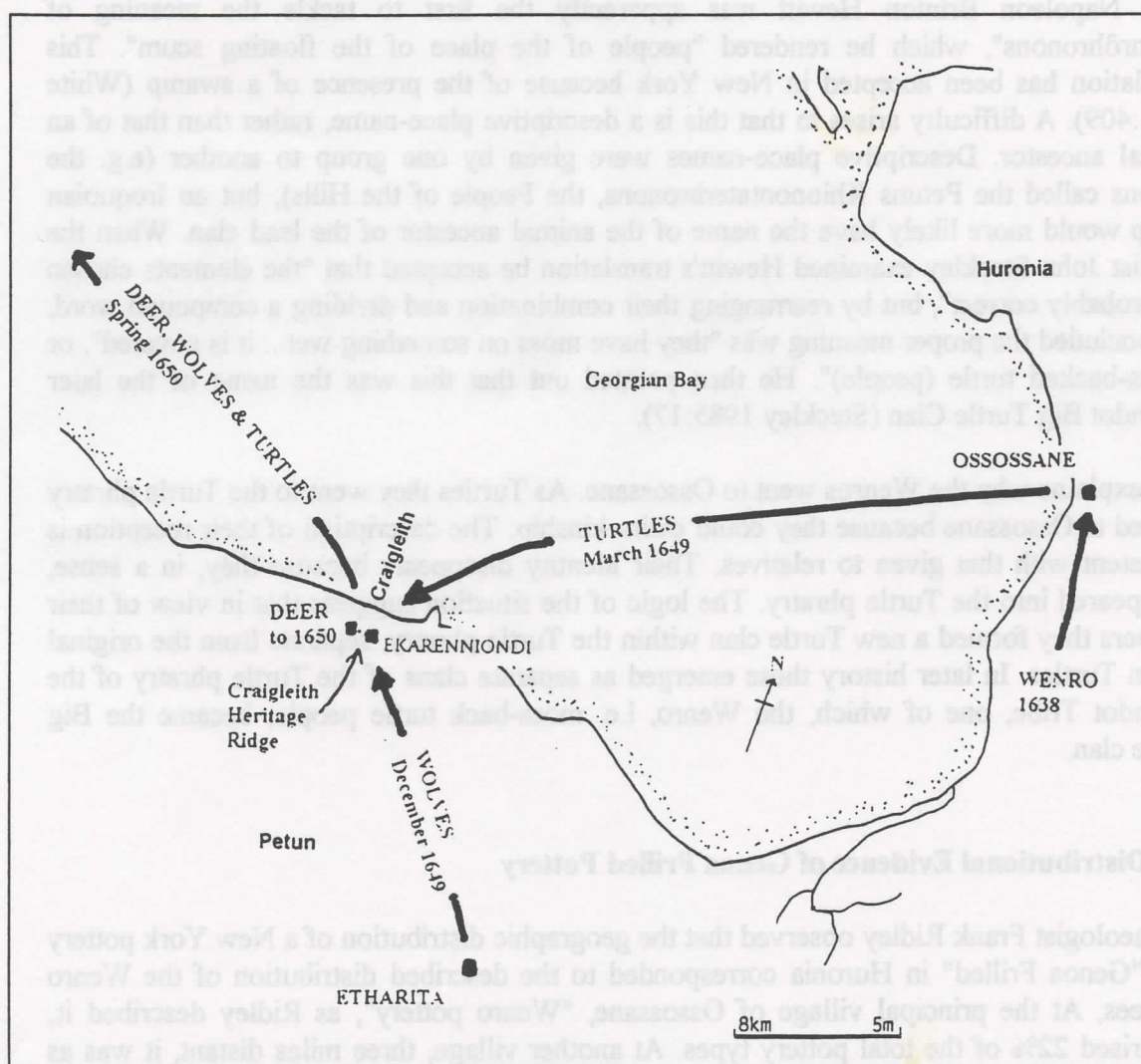


Figure 1 Wenro Movements 1638-1650

Ossossane - "a turtle stronghold"

The Huron Bear nation was divided into northern and southern Bear, a division detectable historically (Steckley 1982), linguistically (Steckley 1990:29; 1991:15-16), and archaeologically (Ridley 1973), through the restricted southern distribution of the Genoa Frilled pottery type, which Frank Ridley called "Wenro pottery". Logically this division was by phratries, the northern Bear being the Bear phratry (the Bear and Deer clans), and the southern Bear being the Turtle phratry (the Turtle and Beaver clans). As the principal village of the southern Bear, Ossossane was at the same time the principal village of the Turtle phratry, and "a turtle stronghold" (Steckley 1982:33).

The Meaning and Significance of "Wenrôhronons"

John Napoleon Brinton Hewitt was apparently the first to tackle the meaning of "Wenrôhronons", which he rendered "people of the place of the floating scum". This translation has been accepted in New York because of the presence of a swamp (White 1978:409). A difficulty arises in that this is a descriptive place-name, rather than that of an animal ancestor. Descriptive place-names were given by one group to another (e.g. the Hurons called the Petuns Khionontaterhronons, the People of the Hills), but an Iroquoian group would more likely have the name of the animal ancestor of the lead clan. When the linguist John Steckley examined Hewitt's translation he accepted that "the elements chosen are probably correct", but by rearranging their combination and dividing a compound word, he concluded the proper meaning was "they have moss on something wet .. it is covered", or "moss-backed turtle (people)". He then pointed out that this was the name of the later Wyandot Big Turtle Clan (Steckley 1985:17).

This explains why the Wenros went to Ossossane. As Turtles they went to the Turtle phratry centred at Ossossane because they could claim kinship. The description of their reception is consistent with that given to relatives. Their identity disappears because they, in a sense, disappeared into the Turtle phratry. The logic of the situation suggests that in view of their numbers they formed a new Turtle clan within the Turtle phratry, separate from the original Huron Turtles. In later history these emerged as separate clans of the Turtle phratry of the Wyandot Tribe, one of which, the Wenro, i.e. moss-back turtle people, became the Big Turtle clan.

The Distributional Evidence of Genoa Frilled Pottery

Archaeologist Frank Ridley observed that the geographic distribution of a New York pottery type "Genoa Frilled" in Huronia corresponded to the described distribution of the Wenro refugees. At the principal village of Ossossane, "Wenro pottery", as Ridley described it, comprised 22% of the total pottery types. At another village, three miles distant, it was as high as 90% (Ridley 1961:43, cited in Ridley 1973; Ridley 1973:10-19). Later research

extended the distributional range and somewhat amended the figures, but confirmed the basic interpretation, and it is accepted that Genoa Frilled pottery in Huronia equates with the Wenro.

Genoa Frilled is also found on the two most northern Petun sites, near the shore at Craigeleith, visible across Nottawasaga Bay from Ossossane. How it got there may be deduced from the two accounts of the abandonment of Ossossane.

Ossossane Abandoned

On the night of March 19, 1649, the people of Ossossane learned that the Iroquois enemy had invaded the eastern part of the Huron country, and could be approaching. They abandoned Ossossane (and district ?), and fled to the Petun, supposedly across the ice of frozen Georgian Bay (Figure 1). Neither of the two known accounts of this event provide a complete picture. Father Francesco Bressani mentions that "The women, the children, and many centenarian Old men passed all night on the ice" to get to the Petun (JR39:251), but not where they came from, nor that they were accompanied by the Jesuit Father resident at Ossossane. This was Father Joseph Marie Chaumonot, perhaps significantly the Wenro/Neutral language specialist. His account is regrettably brief, mentioning neither Ossossane nor the Petun by name (but by adequate description), and omitting to state if the journey from the one to the other was over the ice. He did state that the village, "which was almost entirely Christian", was abandoned in apprehension of the supposedly approaching Iroquois, and that he "followed those poor fugitives in order to help them in their salvation" (Martin 1885:93,94). The Turtle people of Ossossane, accompanied by Chaumonot, arrived at the Petun and were received into the two Deer villages at Craigeleith as refugees.

Wenro Adaptation Among the Petun

The Ossossane Turtle phratry refugees who fled to the Petun took refuge in the first two Petun villages they reached, on the Nipissing ridge inland overlooking the present Georgian Bay shore at Craigeleith. The larger village was EKARENNIONDI, in its last location, the principal village of the Petun confederacy, and of the Deer nation, phratry, moiety and clan, archaeologically the Plater-Martin BdHb-1 site. The smaller village, archaeologically the Plater-Fleming BdHb-2 site, served as a detached suburb of EKARENNIONDI. The Huron Turtles and Petun Deer, who could see each other's territory across Nottawasaga Bay, had been close allies for some time, and the similarity of "southern bear" (Turtle) and Petun dialects hints a relationship continuing from ancient times (Steckley 1993:20). That the Turtles who took refuge in the two Petun villages included Wenros is indicated by the presence of Genoa Frilled pottery on both sites, the only two sites in the Petun country with the type (Garrad 1980:109-111).

At the time, the Petun comprised two factions, the Deer and the Wolves (JR33:143). As presented, the Deer and the Wolves seem to have been, at the same time, "Nations", moieties, phratries and clans. That the Turtle refugees stayed with the Petun Deer was

dictated by a combination of convenience, circumstance and protocol (principal village), and also possibly clan/moiety connection. The other Petun villages were not only further south and further inland, but belonged to the opposite Wolf moiety.

The refugees stayed together at Craigeleith until May 1, 1649, when Chaumonot and "many of his dispersed flock" left the Petun to go to Christian Island, where other Hurons had already taken refuge (Jones 1909:379,382-3).

Chaumonot stated that the population of Ossossane "was almost entirely Christian". There were therefore some who were not. Jones said that "many" of Chaumonot's Christians departed with him. There were some therefore who did not. From this it is evident, even though not specifically stated, that a contingent of Turtle people from Ossossane and related dependent villages, remained with the Petun after Chaumonot's Christian party left on May 1, 1649. The Turtles had arrived to stay.

On December 7, 1649, the principal village of the Petun Wolves was attacked and destroyed by the Iroquois. Many of the inhabitants were captured and removed to New York (JR35:107-111; JR41:119; JR45:207). The surviving Petun consolidated for the winter in the two most northern villages at Craigeleith, and in the spring of 1650, abandoned their country. Following their Odawa allies westward, the Petun Deer and Wolves were accompanied by their new Turtle compatriots, the Huron Turtle and Wenro ("moss-back turtle people"). This threesome remained together through a long migration and a difficult future, and become known in future history under their proper collective name, Wyandot, although the French long continued to call them all Hurons.

During the migration no information is directly available concerning the internal organisation of the Petun-Huron-Wenro as Wyandot. A suggestive hint resulted from a celebration of Christmas at St. Ignace, circa. 1677, in which "All the Hurons, Christians and non-Christians, divided themselves into three companies, according to the different nations that constitute their village" (JR61:115). This suggests the Deer and Wolves had been joined by a third phratry. That the Turtles had been elevated into a third phratry seems probable, as the refugee Wyandot underwent several later similar political internal reorganizations.

At Detroit, in 1721, it was noted that the Wyandots residing near the French fort were actually "the Tionnontatez, a tribe of the Hurons" (Lajeunesse 1960:26-27). This is not to deny the Huron and Wenro components, but an example of a group being known by its largest constituent part (Tooker 1978:404).

In 1747 a detailed census of the Wyandots on the Detroit River was made.

The Phratries and Clans of the Wyandots at Detroit in 1747

In 1747, Father Pierre Potier compiled a census of the "Hurons" residing at locations along the Detroit river. Under the title "Les trois bandes huronnes, divisées en 10" (The Three Huron Bands Divided into Ten), he provided the names of ten clans grouped into three "bands" in a sequence presumably corresponding to their precedence.

The first of these was the Deer phratry under Chief Sastaretsi, with three clans, the deer, snake and bear. The second was the Turtle phratry under Chief Saens8at, with four clan names for which no English translations are given. The third was the Wolf phratry under Chief Taechiaten, with three clans, the wolf, hawk and sturgeon (Potier, cited in Lajeunesse 1960:37, 253).

Later evidence suggests that the four Turtle phratry clan names became understood to represent Big (Mud, moss-back) Turtle, Little (Striped) Turtle, Prairie Turtle, and Hawk. By this time the Turtle phratry had achieved ascendancy over the older Wolves (Lajeunesse 1960).

The Later Wyandot

In the years to come, the Wenro (moss-back) Turtles continued to flourish while their erstwhile hosts declined. Eventually, their descendants would achieve the dominant role in the surviving Wyandot Tribe.

Other reorganisations and changes would follow in more recent times. Moieties, never really visible, disappeared. Clan names and phratry alignments changed. The supremacy of the Deer was supplanted by the Big Turtle. The Wolves ceased to be a phratry. Elected chiefs replaced the hereditary system, although for many years the voting list was still organized by phratry and clan. On the 1874 list seven clans appear, in three phratries, Turtle, Deer and Wolf. The Turtle Phratry had become the senior, led by the Big Turtle clan (Hancks 1997:4,111,113,148). The Deer and Wolf were reduced in status, but still together, an echo of their ancient Tionnontate (Petun) origin.

Among the Oklahoma Wyandot in 1911-1912, Marius Barbeau found absolute disagreement concerning whether the Deer or Big Turtle was anciently the most senior: "the Big Turtle people unanimously claim the Big Turtle clan to be the most ancient and first in rank, while the members of the Deer phratry claim their own clan and phratry to be the foremost" (Barbeau 1915:86). Barbeau concluded these opinions went back to the time when both clans were still independent and supreme (Barbeau 1915:85), and in this opinion is undoubtedly correct. Significantly, he recorded that the word still in most frequent use by the Oklahoma Wyandots to name the Big Turtle actually meant the "moss-back turtle" (Barbeau 1915:86). As long as the language remained in use, the Wenro were still known by their own name.

A Personal Note

In 1974, the writer made the first of three visits to the Wyandotte Tribe of Oklahoma, the principal descendants of the Ontario Petun. While there I met, and was adopted by, "Shundiahwah", Mrs. Cecile Wallace, regarded as the last Senior Matron of the Big Turtle Clan. And so I became a Big Turtle. Until John Steckley's work I had enjoyed thinking of myself as an adopted Petun, but now I find that I am really a Wenro.

The 350th anniversary of the removal of the Huron-Wenro Turtles from Huronia to join the Petun Deer and Wolf, an event which could be regarded as the birth of the historic Wyandot Tribe, will occur next year, 1999. The year after, 2000, will be the 50th anniversary of The Ontario Archaeological Society, and the 350th anniversary of the dispersal, the largest recorded movement of native people from Ontario. We have no immediate shortage of potential symposium themes!

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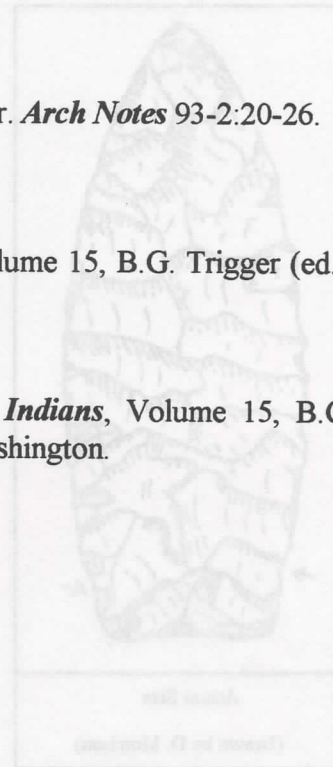
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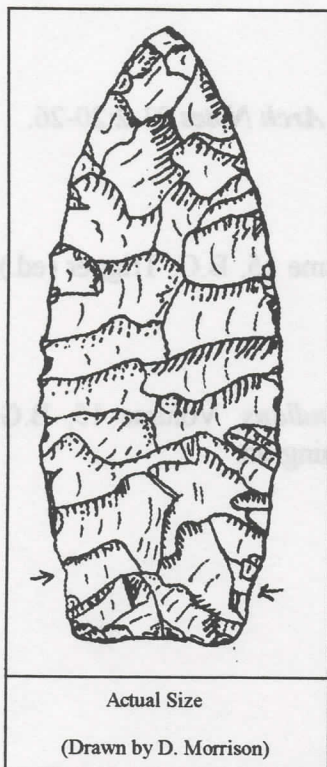
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PLAINVILLE PLANO POINTS

L. J. Jackson



Size: Length = 30-178 mm (mean of 83 mm)
Width = 20-46 mm (mean of 30 mm)
Thickness = 4-10 mm (mean of 6 mm)
Basal Width = 15-23 mm (mean of 21 mm)

Shape: These points are gently expanding lanceolates with a long and tapering tip section. Basal configuration is most distinctive with a straight to slightly incurvate "square" base, weal basal ears, small lateral edge notches 6 to 12 mm above the base, plano-convex to biconvex cross-section, and light basal and lateral edge grinding.

Flaking: Surface flaking generally consists of shallow, medium width, parallel-sided flake scars in an overall collateral pattern leaving a median ridge on both faces of the point.

Raw Material: Points are known primarily on Onondaga chert but also include examples made from Bayport chert and Manitoulin formation quartzite.

Distribution: These points have a very broad range, occurring from near Leamington in southwesternmost Ontario (P. Lennox 1997: personal communication), north to the Ontario Island uplands near Flesherton (Storck 1972), and east to Ancaster, near Hamilton (Griffin-Short 1997: personal communication) and Rice Lake in south-central Ontario (Jackson 1997).

Age and Cultural Affiliation: There are no dated contexts yet known for these points. However, flaking characteristics and morphological attributes support an age circa 10,000 to 9,500 B.P. in the Late Palaeo-Indian period.

Comments: The Plainville point has no exact parallel in the Late Palaeo-Indian Plains sequence but is similar to the unfluted Midland and Plainview types. Prufer (1963) illustrates a similar, but more broadly expanding Late Palaeo-Indian lanceolate from the McConnell site in Ohio.

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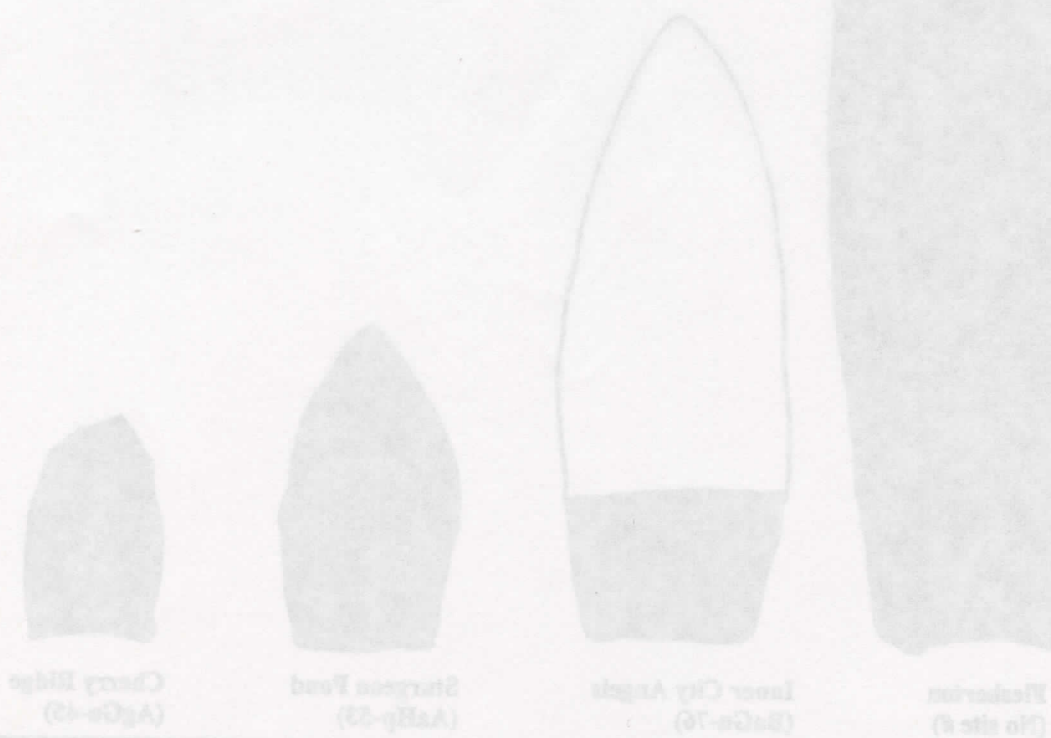


Figure 1 Size Range for Plainville Points in Southern Ontario

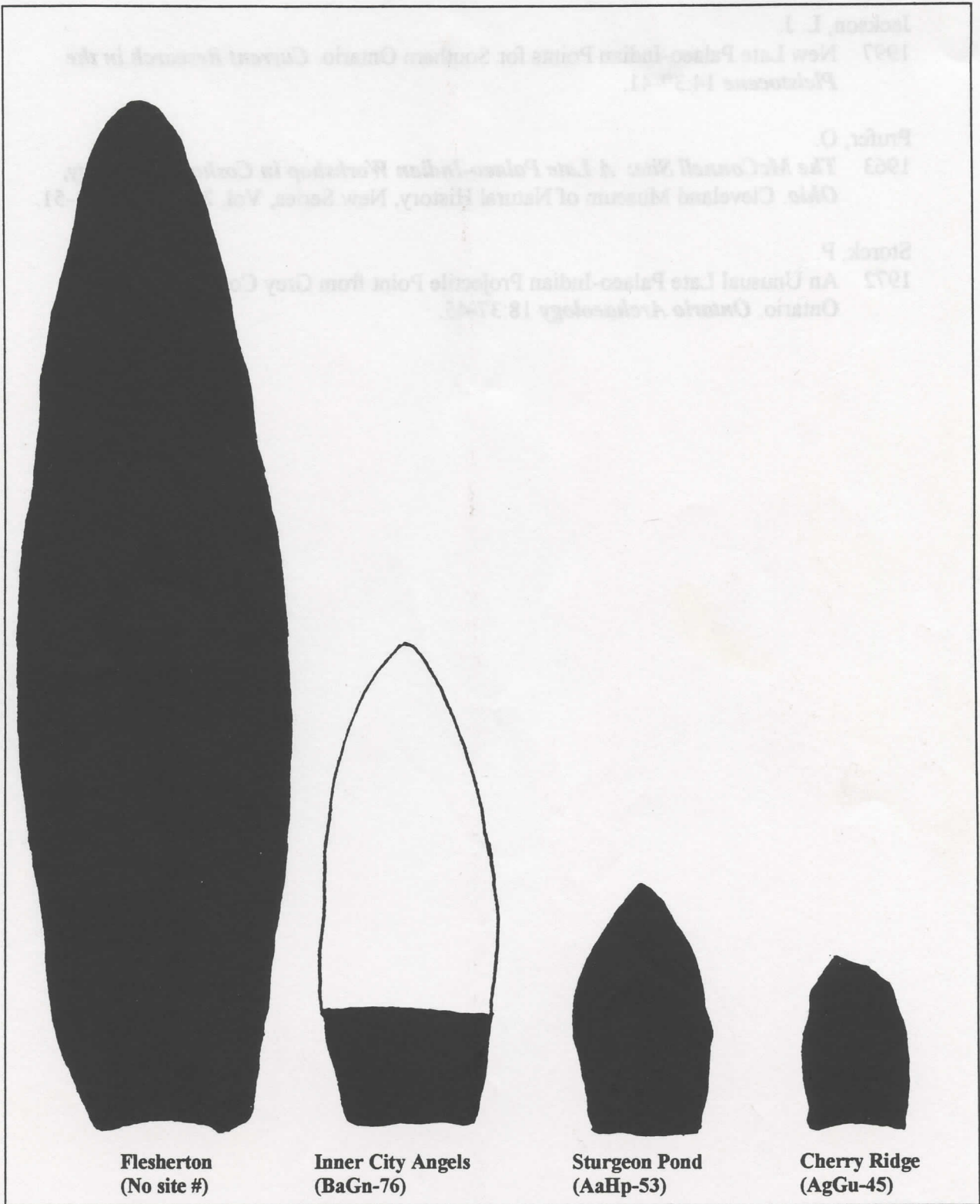


Figure 1 Size Range for Plainville Points in Southern Ontario